As seen in Figures 3 and 4, the separator may also include one or more notches 53 that are formed in the carrier 22. The notches 53 may be formed in the cavity 30 and may be used to enhance the separability of the carrier 22. As also shown in Figure 3, an indentation 49 may be formed on the underside of the carrier 22. The indentation 49 may be variously configured, and may be v-shaped. As seen in the embodiment depicted in Figure 3, the indentation 49 may extend across substantially the entire width of the carrier 22.

Any of the structures disclosed herein may be used alone or in combination with each other to form the separator of the present invention. For example and as shown in Figure 12, a perforation 35 may be positioned within a depression 36 that is disposed on the surface 44 of the carrier 22. In the same embodiment, a pair of notches 53 may be positioned on the carrier 22 to assist in separating the first well 26 from the second well 28.

A wide variety of compounds may be disposed within the first and/or second wells that permit the testing of a specimen such as, for example, a tissue biopsy specimen. In some embodiments, compounds such as those described in the patents listed herein may be used in the present invention to test for *Helicobacter pylori.*

The ability to separate the first well from the second well can be beneficial to users of such a test system. For example, in a particular embodiment, a composition which tests a specimen for a particular bacteria may be disposed in the first well 26 while the second well 28 may contain a composition which tests for a different bacteria. The tests may be separated from each other before or after the insertion of specimens into the wells 26 and 28. Such a feature may assist in processing, monitoring, handling or storage of the tests.

In some embodiments, the well 28 may contain a medium such as an agar that preserves a specimen. In such embodiments, if it is desired or necessary to repeat the analysis performed in the first well 26, it is not necessary to obtain another specimen, as the specimen contained within the second well 28 may be subjected to the particular test when desired. In such a situation, the specimen that is retained within the second well 28 may be subjected to different environmental conditions to assist in preserving the specimen while the first well

26 may be subjected to different environmental conditions to assist in obtaining expedited results.

Of course, any composition may be disposed in either of the wells 26 or 28, and it is not required that any particular composition be disposed within the first well 26.

A composition 100 may be provided within the first well 26 that is adapted to detect the presence of *Helicobacter pylori.* A composition 102 may also be provided within the second well 28, the composition 102 being adapted to detect the presence of *Helicobacter pylori.*

Particular embodiments of the specimen-handling tool 24 are shown in Figures 6 – 11 and 17. The specimen-handling tool 24 may include, as shown in Figures 6-9, a pair of cooperating arms 54 and 55. Each arm 54 and 55 may include a tip portion 56 and 57, respectively. The arms 54 and 55 may each also include a rear portion 58 and 59, respectively. The arms 54 and 55 may be joined to each other at their rear portions 58 and 59, respectively, forming a joined end 60. The joined end 60 may be configured to assist the user in accomplishing particular tasks, such as, for example, manipulating a specimen, removing a plug 86 (see Figure 14) from one of the first and/or second wells 26 and 28, respectively, as well as other tasks. The outermost portion of the joined end 60 may be variously configured, and may be formed as a narrow projection, such as that shown in Figure 10.

As seen in Figures 8 and 9, each arm 54 and 55 may also include a rearward arcuate portion 62 and 63, respectively, and a forward arcuate portion 66 and 67, respectively. Disposed between each rearward arcuate portion 62 and 63 and its corresponding forward arcuate portion 66 and 67, respectively, is an intermediate arcuate portion 64 and 65, respectively. The arcuate portions 62-64-66 and 63-65-67 of each arm 54 and 55, respectively, may be configured so that the area disposed between the arms 54 and 55 is approximately hourglass in shape. In such an embodiment, the rearward arcuate portions 62 and 63 and forward arcuate portions 66 and 67 curve outwardly, and the intermediate arcuate portions 64 and 65 curve inwardly.

The intermediate arcuate portions 64 and 65 may be formed so that a user may more easily grip these portions. As shown in Figure 6, one or more ribs 52

may be positioned on the outer surface of the intermediate arcuate portions 64 and 65. Alternately, a portion of the arms 54 and/or 55 may have a roughened texture to enable a user to more effectively grasp and manipulate the specimen-handling tool 24, such as is shown in Figure 10 at 51.

The arms 54 and/or 55 may include fewer or more arcuate portions than the three arcuate portions described above, such as the specimen-handling tool shown in Figure 11. The arcuate portions of the arms 54 and/or 55 may have a more or less pronounced arcuate shape than what is depicted in Figure 6. For example and as shown in Figures 10 – 12 and 17, other configurations of the arms 54 and 55 may be used in the specimen-handling tool 24.

The tip portions 56 and 57 may be variously formed to enable a user to manipulate a specimen. The tip portions 56 and 57 may be formed to include a surface such as the surfaces 70. The surfaces 70 may be variously shaped and, in particular, one or both of the surfaces 70 may be curved (as shown in Figure 10) or flat (as shown in Figure 6). The surfaces 70 may be rough or smooth. Also, structures such as the ridges 78 that are depicted in Figure 11 may also be positioned on one or more of the surfaces 70. The surfaces 70 may be disposed so that they are at least somewhat facing each other, thereby enabling a user to grasp a specimen and hold it between the surfaces 70. As shown in Figure 10, the tip portions 56 and/or 57 may curve outwardly, and may, in some embodiments such as is shown in Figure 11, end in a relatively sharp edge 74. One or both of the tip portions 56 and 57 may include a point, such as the point 80 shown in Figure 10 or a fork 82, also shown in Figure 10, or any number of other configurations.

The specimen-handling tool may be formed from a variety of materials, including, for example, plastics including polycarbonate, polystyrene, polypropylene, polyethylene, polyvinylchloride, or any other type of polyolefin.

Referring now to Figures 15 and 16, an overlying member 23 may be disposed over at least a portion of the surface 44 of the carrier 22. At least a portion of the cavity 30 may be formed by the wall 31. The overlying member 23 may take the form of an adhesive-backed label that adheres to at least a portion of the surface 44. The overlying member 23 may overly any combination of the first well 26, the second well 28 and the cavity 30.